

1 Introduction

This is Cambridgeshire's second full Local Transport Plan (LTP). It reflects the challenges facing the county and charts the way forward to provide a high quality transport system for all of our residents. As with the first LTP, it is produced by a partnership of Cambridge County Council and the five district councils of Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire, and represents a consensus on the future transport policy for the county.

The Issues

Cambridgeshire is a dynamic county - the key issues of growth and change are ones with which we are familiar through the rapid employment and population growth experienced over the last quarter century. This has transformed Cambridge from market town to world beating centre of technology with its knock on effects, both positive and negative, across the region. Despite all that has gone before, Cambridgeshire now stands at a crossroads and faces growth and change on an unprecedented scale.

Growth - The revised Structure Plan requires that around 60,000 new houses be built by 2016 in a sustainable way, concentrating development on existing urban areas and a proposed new settlement to the north of Cambridge. Infrastructure, particularly transport, is needed to serve this new development and address the deficit in provision that we have faced in the past. It is currently estimated that for transport alone, in excess of £1 billion of investment will be needed over the next fifteen years.

Change - As the county grows, so its needs change. There are pressures on all transport systems and public transport will need to play an increasing role in providing sustainable travel if the very essence of Cambridgeshire, the quality of environment, is to be preserved.

Our response to these challenges is to prepare a clear vision for transport over the next seven years through this LTP. The fundamental aim of this is to maintain and improve the quality of life and the quality of the environment by balancing the protection and enhancement of the unique character of the Cambridgeshire environment with maintenance and advancement of the growth of the local economy.

Cambridgeshire is of national and international importance in education, high technology and the knowledge-based sectors. Transport has a key part to play in developing the local economy in a sustainable way. For business, a high quality transport network will maintain the competitive advantage of the area and promote economic development in the less prosperous parts. For residents, transport is central in providing a high quality of life by giving freedom to access

the jobs and facilities that they want and to have a genuine choice of how they travel. Transport needs to rise to this challenge, making sustainable delivery of new development possible. This will be achieved through a series of guiding principles that mirror the government's overarching objectives for transport, which are to promote integration, promote accessibility, improve safety, contribute to an efficient economy and protect the environment.

Integration

Integration is the key to the Cambridgeshire development strategy, which is at the heart of everything we do. In particular, we are looking to achieve the following:

- Integrate land use and transport decisions by influencing the size, location, scale, density and design of development, as well as planning appropriate transport infrastructure.
- Integrate planning for different forms of transport so we provide for seamless journeys, maximise travel choice and the opportunities for our people.
- Integrate our transport decisions with those in the health, education, social care, environmental and economic sectors to ensure that service provision is joined up.
- Integrate the delivery of individual transport schemes, to promote a joined-up way of working across the Council and with other bodies.

The emphasis here is on partnership. By a number of stakeholders and organisations putting resources together, the whole will be greater than its parts. This principle is enshrined in all of the work that we do and will be further enhanced through the Best Value process,¹ which we will develop over the life of this plan.

In this way, we are looking to create truly sustainable communities where people have ready access to jobs, shopping, leisure and other facilities and where transport adds to the quality of all our lives. In particular, we are looking to reduce the need to travel and offer a greater range of travel choices, especially by means other than the car.

Accessibility

Maximising accessibility is central to our objectives - transport is a means to an end, and where it is not provided or not available at appropriate times, people are restricted in their ability to access the facilities they need. Providing improved accessibility improves life chances, reduces social exclusion, enhances our economy and can improve personal health through the availability of essential facilities. We aim to:

- promote and develop all forms of public transport

¹ Best Value is the way local government measures, manages and improves its performance. Best value can apply to a service, a department or a whole council, but is most effective when applied holistically and used to drive improvement.

- improve infrastructure and the environment such that people want to walk and cycle and feel safe in doing so
- improve the way that developments are planned, designing in excellent transport infrastructure provision at an early stage
- improve information so people know what is available
- reduce private car use, and
- seek to minimise congestion on our road network through a combination of all of these measures, but also by tackling congestion hotspots.

Safety

Transport has a key role to play in creating safer environments, by designing in safety to new developments and through addressing areas, both on the road network and particular modes of transport, where safety is an issue. Road maintenance plays an important part in this.

Community safety is a key theme for all of our partners and transport improvements can play its part in developing this.

Economy

Sustaining and developing the local economy is also a key strand of our policy. We are well aware of the role that good maintenance and improved transport networks can have in promoting economic development and of the risks of not making such improvements.

We also recognise that through improving the quality of life of all those who live, work or visit Cambridgeshire, we will create an environment that is attractive to business.

Environment

All of our activities have an impact on the environment, and we will minimise this, principally through sensitive design and promoting sustainable forms of transport. Equally, the role of transport in bringing about environmental improvements and enhancing the quality of life will be promoted.

However, these improvements cannot be achieved overnight and much investment will be needed to bring them about. Our LTP addresses this need - the strategy covers seven years (longer than was the case in the previous LTP) and indicates clearly what transport improvements will be needed beyond 2011. It also makes a direct link between development and transport, providing a clear programme of schemes and linking these to key development areas and issues identified in the Structure Plan.

Developing partnerships to achieve integration

The key to delivering on all of these aspects is close working with our partners. This is a feature of how we have worked in the past and will increasingly be so as we develop the programme and seek to achieve the objectives outlined in this LTP. The essence of this partnership working will be the need for integration across the board to promote sustainability and accessibility.

Public Consultation on our new LTP

Consultation has played a vital role in this Local Transport Plan (full details of this are contained in Appendix 1). The public have been fully involved in considering possible alternatives, as it is essential to recognise the contribution of public input in the creation of all strategies developed for Cambridgeshire.

Our programme of extensive public consultation included:

- distribution of 240,000 leaflets and questionnaires to households throughout Cambridgeshire
- engaging with the public through 19 separate staffed roadshow exhibitions
- un-staffed static exhibitions at over 40 venues
- a programmed media-strategy to raise awareness
- consultation targeted at young people, including visits to schools and engaging with the County's Youth Parliament Members
- innovative consultation techniques, including mobile phone texting for responses and comments
- use of the internet for completing questionnaires on-line and providing LTP information, and
- attending public meetings with town councils and other stakeholders.

The key results from the 5,400 responses were:

- over 85% supported the proposed overall aims of the LTP
- over 90% supported the proposed four draft objectives of the LTP, and a large number of respondents also thought that additional objectives should be included
- over 90% support our proposals for public transport, and
- high levels of support for all the proposed major schemes.

We have therefore demonstrated clear public involvement in producing an inclusive countywide LTP.

The following chapters of this LTP set down the means by which we will rise to this challenge and improve transport across Cambridgeshire.

Chapter 2 looks at two of the main influences on this LTP - the integration with land-use planning and the multi-modal studies.

Chapter 3 sets the scene for the LTP objectives and strategy, by looking at the problems and opportunities facing the county.

Chapter 4 reports on our headline objectives, indicators and targets for transport.

Chapter 5 gives details of our transport strategy for the county.

Chapter 6 shows how we are putting policies into practice by looking at individual transport topics and strategies, relating them to our vision, our overall objectives and to the LTP strategy.

Chapter 7 gives details of the major schemes (those schemes costing over £5 million) that form part of the LTP programme.

Chapter 8 shows how we will integrate transport with other important areas such as accessibility, health and the environment and looks at key partnerships to deliver the LTP.

Chapter 9 looks at our past achievements and other key issues.

Chapter 10 sets out the programme we will need to achieve to deliver this.

Chapter 11 concludes the LTP and demonstrates how we have met the checklist of government criteria for LTPs.

